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NRG Energy, Inc.
910 Louisiana Street
Houston, Texas 77002

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PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
FILING CLERK

June 2, 2021

Chairman Peter Lake
Commissioner Will McAdams
Public Utility Commission of Texas
1701 N. Congress Ave.
Austin, Texas 78701

Re: Project No. 51812, *Issues Related to the State of Disaster for the February 2021 Winter Weather Event*

Dear Chairman Lake and Commissioner McAdams:

NRG Energy, Inc. ("NRG") and its retail electric providers ("REPs")¹ continue to provide assistance, reassurance, and resources to Texans recovering from the impacts of Winter Storm Uri. As the Commission considers the issue of when to lift the disconnection moratorium that remains in place for the areas of ERCOT open to retail electric competition, rest assured that customers of the NRG REPs will receive ample support.

The NRG REPs agree with the observations made in the memorandum filed by Commissioner McAdams in this project on June 1, 2021 that the continuation of the disconnection moratorium could lead to an unsustainable impact on a significant number of financially at-risk Texas consumers. As Commissioner McAdams notes, there are better resources available to customers to assist with unpaid bills than the moratorium currently provides.

To that end, below is a summary of some of the voluntary actions NRG and its REPs have taken to help customers in the wake of Winter Storm Uri and will continue to take once the disconnection moratorium ends:

- **Bill Payment Assistance.** During and after Winter Storm Uri, the NRG REPs have provided several bill payment assistance options, including payment extensions and deferred payment plans. The deferred payment plan terms offered to customers are often more generous than the Commission rule requirements that the down payment amount should be no greater than 50% of the amount due, with at least five (5) equal installments.

At the end of the disconnection moratorium, for residential and small commercial customers with past due balances at risk of disconnection as of June 1, 2021, the NRG REPs will offer a deferred payment plan with a down payment of no greater than 35% of the amount due, with up to seven (7) installments.

¹ Reliant, Green Mountain Energy, Cirro Energy, Discount Power, XOOM Energy, Stream, Direct Energy, CPL Retail Energy, WTU Retail Energy, First Choice Power, and Direct Energy Business.



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- **Reliant CARE Program and Additional Payment Assistance.** The CARE (Community Assistance by Reliant Energy) program works with nonprofit agencies to assist residential customers, including seniors and low-income families, with paying their Reliant electricity bills. Following Winter Storm Uri, an additional \$500,000 was provided to the CARE program to help customers in need. Since 2002, Reliant and its customers have contributed more than \$12 million through the CARE program for Texans who need help with electricity costs. The NRG REPs also provide direct financial relief to customers, which takes various forms and is specific to the individual customer's needs.
- **Community Assistance.** NRG and Reliant have made a \$4 million commitment in cash donations to the communities we serve to address food and water shortages, temporary or damaged housing and the overall recovery effort across Texas. This includes support for local food banks, disaster relief organizations and a \$500,000 contribution to the Houston Harris County Winter Storm Relief Fund, established by the City of Houston and Harris County and jointly administered by United Way of Greater Houston and the Greater Houston Community Foundation. For a full list of nonprofits who have been supported, visit <https://www.reliant.com/en/about/community/index.jsp> and choose "winter storm relief" from the drop-down menu

This summer, Reliant will once again offer its annual Beat the Heat program, which will make cooling centers available in Corpus Christi, Dallas, and Houston to help residents stay cool and combat high heat exposure. The program, which includes both physical cooling centers and distribution of portable cooling devices, are part of our commitment to underserved communities.

- **Other Agency Assistance, such as Texas Rent Relief.** All NRG REPs work with assistance agencies to provide further bill payment assistance to customers. We are helping get the word out about the Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs Texas Rent Relief Program, which can provide up to 15 months of electric bill payment assistance to customers who rent their homes.

NRG hopes this information is helpful to the Commission as it evaluates lifting the disconnection moratorium issued on February 21, 2021.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Elizabeth Killinger". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

Elizabeth Killinger
Executive Vice President, NRG Home